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Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century": implementation of strategic objectives and action in the critical areas of concern and further action and initiatives: women's human rights and the elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls as defined in the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of the special session of the General Assembly

Statement submitted by the All-China Women's Federation, a non-governmental organization in general and consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31 of 25 July 1996.

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Elimination of violence against women: an unshirkable duty of women's federations

14 January 2003

The All-China Women's Federation (ACWF) is the largest women's mass organization in China. To represent and safeguard women's rights is the aim and one major function of women's federations. ACWF utilizes its network, which covers all cities and counties in the country and reaches every sector, for its work for women's rights and advancement.

In implementing the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome document of the special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality,

* E/CN.6/2003/1.



development and peace for the twenty-first century", women's federations have carried out a series of actions, including combating violence against women, proposing legislation and helping to formulate and improve relevant laws and regulations, conducting legal literacy campaigns as well as participating in the implementation and monitoring of law enforcement.

1. ACWF is of the view that the law is a fundamental, powerful weapon for safeguarding women's rights and interests. In recent years, based on data collection and situation analysis on violence against women, women's federations have participated in the formulation process of laws and regulations closely related to women's rights. For example, ACWF has surveyed and reflected women's opinions and concerns, put forward suggestions and participated in drafting laws such as the Law of the People's Republic of China on the Protection of Women's Rights and Interests and the Programme for the development of Chinese women (2001-2010) and amending the Marriage Law. The Marriage Law, as amended in 2001, stipulates that domestic violence is prohibited.

2. One of the priorities of ACWF is to raise the legal awareness of people and educate women to understand, obey and apply laws. Women's federations at different levels have conducted various kinds of legal literacy and publicity activities, such as legal counselling, setting up an on-site office and conducting lectures, workshops and case studies. They have cooperated with the media in nurturing a positive public opinion for the elimination of all forms of violence against women through increased media coverage on discussions about the issue of violence against women, further exposure of violent acts against women and educating the public that the infringement of women's rights is illegal and shall be subject to punishment, if the circumstances are serious.

3. Women's federations are active in comprehensive administration regarding penalizing criminal acts against women. Taking the campaign against trafficking in women and children as an example, many provinces have established cross-sector working mechanisms, including leading groups composed of representatives of the police, judiciary, court, civil affairs, publicity and education departments and non-governmental organizations.

To assist the Government in combating trafficking in women and children, the staff of women's federations has paid household visits in urban and rural neighbourhoods to trace clues of trafficking, mobilize local residents and help rescue trafficked women and children. They have also followed up with rehabilitation and reintegration activities.

4. ACWF takes the campaign against trafficking in women and children as a priority area for cooperation projects with the Government and international agencies. One example is the Mekong River Subregional Project to Combat Trafficking in Children and Women, conducted jointly by ACWF and the International Labour Organization in Yunnan Province. The Labour, Education and Civil Affairs Departments all participated and provided educational, prevention and rehabilitation services. A comprehensive mechanism for the campaign against trafficking in women and children has been basically established and efforts are being made to disseminate further effective prevention strategies and models.

5. In recent years, to eliminate domestic violence against women, women's federations have pushed hard for the formulation of legal provisions and laws

against domestic violence. They have also provided hotlines, legal aid centres or work as legal agents or juries for women whose rights were violated. Now, the issue of domestic violence has drawn the attention of all sectors in the society.

Together with the international community, the All-China Women's Federation will continue to make unremitting efforts for women's rights and gender equality in a devoted and responsible spirit.
